

REMARKS

Claims 1 to 24 are pending in this application of which claims 1, 9 and 17 are the independent claims. Favorable reconsideration and further examination are respectfully requested.

Claims 1 to 24 were rejected under either §§ 102 or 103 over U.S. Patent No. 6,346,956 (Matsuda). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

Claim 1 is directed to a method of selecting a target object in virtual three-dimensional space. The method includes identifying objects, including the target object, in the virtual three-dimensional space and determining distances between the objects and a point in the virtual three-dimensional space. The method also includes prioritizing the objects based on the distances and identities of the objects and selecting the target object from among the objects based on priority.

The applied art is not understood to disclose or suggest the foregoing features of claim 1. In particular, Matsuda does not disclose or suggest prioritizing objects based on the distances and identities of the objects.

Specifically, Matsuda shows objects and their identities as well as their positions in a three-dimensional (3D) space in Cartesian coordinates. A user clicks on these objects to see a corresponding three-dimensional space. However, Matsuda never discloses or suggests to calculate distances between these objects. Positional data in of itself does not describe distances. An extra mathematical step is required to turn positional data into distance data. For example, the distance between two points, P_1 and P_2 in Cartesian coordinates is equal to:

$$\sqrt{(x_2 - x_1)^2 + (y_2 - y_1)^2 + (z_2 - z_1)^2}$$

Moreover, Matsuda never describes prioritizing the objects based on distance much less prioritizing the objects based on distance and identity. In fact, Matsuda never describes priority at all between the objects.

For at least the foregoing reasons, Applicants request withdrawal of the art rejection.

Claims 9 and 17 roughly correspond to claim 1. Accordingly, claims 9 and 17 are believed to be allowable for at least the same reasons noted above with respect to claim 1.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants submit that the entire application is now in condition for allowance. Such action is respectfully requested at the Examiner's earliest convenience.

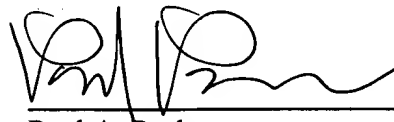
All correspondence should be directed to the below address. Applicants' attorney can be reached by telephone at the number shown below.

No fee is believed to be due for this Response; however, if any fees are due please apply such fees to Deposit Account No. 06-1050 referencing Attorney Docket 10559-455001.

Respectfully submitted,

Date: _____

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Paul A. Rysher
Reg. No. 40,780

ATTORNEYS FOR INTEL
Fish & Richardson P.C.
225 Franklin Street
Boston, MA 02110-2804
Telephone: (617) 542-5070
Facsimile: (617) 542-8906